Dear Melbourne City Councillors,

**Agenda item title:** Agenda 6.9

I’m writing to express my strongest support for the continued roll out of Melbourne CBD bike lanes.

There has never been a more important time to roll out quality active transport infrastructure - including bike lanes and footpaths.

By continuing to create a network of safe, separated bike lanes, the Melbourne City Council can empower members of the community with better choices to move in ways that are healthier, reduce car traffic and improve air quality.

There are many reasons bike lanes are an important part of our transport system - and should be receiving increased government funding and attention:

**Reduce car traffic:** Creating a safe network of bike lanes, separated from roads, helps people gravitate towards bike-riding and reduces car traffic, achieving '[traffic evaporation](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/video/2022/may/17/why-new-bike-lanes-dont-cause-traffic-jams-video).’ By making riding more convenient, those who can will leave their car at home, thereby making it easier for people to move around our city.

**Improving local air quality and health outcomes for communities:** Air pollution from cars, trucks and fossil-fuel powered buses is responsible for an estimated [1,700 deaths](http://www.nespurban.edu.au/publications-%20resources/research-reports/CAULRR06_%20%20SubmissionFuelQualityStandardsAct2000_Mar2017.pdf) every year in Australia - larger than the national road toll. If more people rode to work or university instead of driving, we’d see a reduction in the number of Melbournians dying from air pollution.

**Improve accessibility:** Improving footpaths, bike lanes and public transport can make it easier for Australia’s most vulnerable and marginalised groups to get around. These upgrades can dramatically impact older people, those living with a disability, low income households and migrant communities.

**Reduce the cost of living as fuel prices rise and inflation rise while wages stagnant:** Bike-riding and walking are the cheapest travel options, and improved infrastructure allows more Melbournians to experience these benefits.

To conclude, I was alarmed to see Melbourne City Council considering pausing the roll out of critical infrastructure for the precedent it sets and for the message it sends across Melbourne, interstate and even abroad.

A few voices should not outweigh the benefits to Melbournians who would use this infrastructure, as well as those who stand to gain from secondhand benefits such as cleaner air, less traffic, safer roads and action on climate change

I want to express my gratitude for the bike lanes that have been rolled out to date (and accelerated during COVID-19). I sincerely hope that you persevere with your bike strategy, which was outlined well before the pandemic.

Yours sincerely,